

## Case 3040

***Cicada clavicornis* Fabricius, 1794 (currently *Asiraca clavicornis*; Insecta, Homoptera): proposed conservation of the specific name**

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**Abstract.** The purpose of this application is the conservation of the specific name of the widely distributed delphacid planthopper *Asiraca clavicornis* (Fabricius, 1794), the type species of *Asiraca* Latreille, [1796]. It has recently been suggested that *Cimex aequinoctialis* Scopoli, 1763 and *Cicada quadristriata* Gmelin, 1790 are senior synonyms of *A. clavicornis*, and that the former should be adopted; however, the introduction of either of these unused names would disturb the settled nomenclature of more than 200 years and their suppression is proposed.

**Keywords.** Nomenclature; taxonomy; Homoptera; DELPHACIDAE; *Asiraca clavicornis*; *Cimex aequinoctialis*; planthoppers.

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1. Fabricius (1794, p. 41) described the delphacid planthopper *Cicada clavicornis* from France, and the female holotype is preserved at the Muséum National d'Histoire Naturelle in Paris (T. Bourgoin, pers. comm.); it is the type species of *Asiraca* Latreille, [1796] (pp. xii, 202) by the subsequent designation of Latreille (1810, p. 434). *A. clavicornis* is now known to be a widely distributed although seldom common species, and is found in most Western Palearctic countries (Nast, 1972). Metcalf (1943) listed 213 literature citations from 1794 to 1940 (the last year of his catalogue), and there are now over 300; examples include Lindberg (1948), Le Quesne (1960), Servadei (1967), Asche (1985) and Kirby (1992), and a list of 15 recent ones has been given to the Commission Secretariat. *A. clavicornis* is easy to identify and has not been called by any other name since the 18th century.

2. Scopoli (1763, p. 132) described *Cimex aequinoctialis* for a species that has remained doubtful ever since. Dolling (1996) has recently argued that Scopoli's description can only refer to *Asiraca clavicornis*, although he notes that the accompanying woodcut is 'so crude as to give no clue to its identity' and that no type material exists. Despite these drawbacks Dolling suggested that the specific name *aequinoctialis* should be adopted.

3. Dolling (1996) also argued that the name *Cicada quadristriata* Gmelin, 1790 (p. 2111) refers to *A. clavicornis*; this was given to a species described but not named

by Zschach (1788). Zschach's description (reproduced and translated by Dolling) might apply to *A. clavicornis*, and the crude woodcut illustration does at least show the tibial spur on the hind leg which is diagnostic of delphacid plant-hoppers. Dolling said that in the absence of *aequinoctialis* the name *quadristriata* should be used.

4. Dolling proposed that since the species can be readily recognised and is of no economic importance there is no advantage in conserving the specific name *clavicornis* Fabricius, 1794. We would argue the contrary. The species is very well known, and has been universally called *Asiraca clavicornis* for more than 200 years; we consider that there is a prima facie case that this stable usage should continue rather than that specific names should be resurrected from total obscurity and cause confusion in the literature.

5. The International Commission on Zoological Nomenclature is accordingly asked:

- (1) to use its plenary powers to suppress for the purposes of the Principle of Priority but not for those of the Principle of Homonymy the following specific names:
  - (a) *aequinoctialis* Scopoli, 1763, as published in the binomen *Cimex aequinoctialis*;
  - (b) *quadristriata* Gmelin, 1790, as published in the binomen *Cicada quadristriata*;
- (2) to place on the Official List of Generic Names in Zoology the name *Asiraca* Latreille, [1796] (gender: feminine), type species by subsequent designation by Latreille (1810) *Cicada clavicornis* Fabricius, 1794;
- (3) to place on the Official List of Specific Names in Zoology the name *clavicornis* Fabricius, 1794, as published in the binomen *Cicada clavicornis* (specific name of the type species of *Asiraca* Latreille, [1796]);
- (4) to place on the Official Index of Rejected and Invalid Specific Names in Zoology the following names:
  - (a) *aequinoctialis* Scopoli, 1763, as published in the binomen *Cimex aequinoctialis* and as suppressed in (1)(a) above;
  - (b) *quadristriata* Gmelin, 1790, as published in the binomen *Cicada quadristriata* and as suppressed in (1)(b) above.

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